

Civic Minds

Date: Friday, June 17, 2016

E-Edition Date: Wednesday, June 15, 2016

Article Title: **Macho promotional pitches for assault rifles may backfire**

Section: Main, A3

Vocabulary:

Look up the definition of ***propriety***. Please write the definition and create a new sentence, using your own words.

“As fraught as the national debate over gun rights has become with each new attack, it may end up being the ***propriety*** of firearms advertising rather than constitutional rights that moves the needle in the intractable, decades-long standoff.”

Comprehension Questions

1. What are some of the gun company's recent attack ad slogans?
2. Recent civilian marketing for the (AR-15) gun seems to focus less on hunting and more on what?
3. The Orlando attack has triggered calls for what three main things?
4. Who is opposing such action?
5. With that landscape in mind, lawyers for the families of children killed in Newtown embarked on a novel legal thrust. Bushmaster, a unit of Cerberus Capital Management's Remington Arms, is negligently doing what?
6. How are they fighting this case?
7. The case has emerged as the strongest legal challenge to the gun industry's claim of immunity under a 2005 federal law. Lawyers for the parents said the AR-15 — its cousin, the M-16, was the rifle of choice in Vietnam — has become what?
8. What do they argue in their lawsuit?
9. The AR-15, which dates to the 1950s, is one of the most popular weapons in history, how many are in American hands?
10. The National Rifle Association calls the AR-15 what?

Class Discussion Questions and Essay Prompts

- ***How did you feel after learning about the shooting in Florida over the weekend?***
- ***What did your conversations with family and friends focus on? What are the greatest concerns?***
- ***What should be done about gun control laws in this nation? Do they need to change? Why or why not?***

Litigation challenging the gun industry in such fashion has largely failed in the past. But Connecticut Superior Court Judge Barbara Bellis allowed the Newtown case to move forward when she recently set a trial date for April 2018. A hearing on Bushmaster's next bid to toss the suit is set for June 20 in Bridgeport Superior Court.

- Why has challenging the gun industry always failed in the past?
- Why is it so hard to create change in this area?

Bushmaster has said in regulatory filings that part of the growth in the market for the AR-15 was due to increased appeal to a "younger demographic of users," according to court papers. In most states, young people can legally purchase an AR-15 before they can drink alcohol, and no safety training is required, the Newtown lawyers said, and at least a dozen states allow kids as young as 14 or 16 to buy the weapon — or have no age limit for buyers — according to court filings.

- How do you feel about who can easily have access to these high powered weapons, with no safety trainings involved?
- What is wrong with this picture?

Plaintiff's lawyers said the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives has determined that the AR-15 is no good for hunting. The weapons are designed to inflict as much damage as possible before law enforcement can arrive, according to the Newtown lawsuit. The gun companies "unethically, oppressively, immorally and unscrupulously marketed and promoted the assaultive qualities and military uses of AR-15s to civilian purchasers," the attorneys conclude.

- What do you think about the marketing campaigns of the gun makers?

Essay

What is the logic behind selling military-grade assault rifles to civilians? Why is it happening and do you think laws will be changed (soon) in this country to stop it? Why or why not?

Newspaper-related CBA activity: U.S. Policy

How the United States government interacts with the world affects people across the globe. Analyze and evaluate the causes and effects of US foreign policy on people in the United States and across the world.

- Using The Seattle Times e-edition, find an article from this week that deals with world politics or foreign policy.
- What are the main points of view from someone living in that particular country? How is that "view" similar and different than your own opinion, regarding the specific issue the article is discussing?
- Why is it important to study and learn about foreign policy? How does it help you understand the world we live in, using current issues and events?

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